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Contents for Week of April 25, 1932. Vol. XI. No. 11

1. Bahama Islands, Our Little Known British Neighbors.
2. The Twenty-Eight States of Mexico.
3. Tristan da Cunha, One of the World's Loneliest Isles.
4. The Eskimo, Guardian of the Last Frontier.
5. Coast Guard Engaged in Annual "Battle with the Bergs."

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THE LILY VENDER, SYMBOL OF MEXICO'S LOVE OF FLOWERS

From the "floating gardens" of Xochimilco (pronounced "soshimeelco"), near Mexico City, treasures of exquisite flowers are brought daily for sale in the streets of the Mexican capital. These gardens, now solid land, were made by putting soil on large rafts of sticks. Even the poorest in Mexico must have a bouquet of gay flowers almost every day (See Bulletin No. 2).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Bahama Islands, Our Little Known British Neighbors

A PARTY of scientists has just returned to this country after a three-month plant exploration of the Bahama Islands.

Strung out for about 700 miles in the Atlantic Ocean off Miami, Florida, the Bahamas consist of some 2,500 islands, rocks and keys, many of which are less known than the more isolated islands of the South Seas. Finding a new lake recently on Andros Island, largest of the group, indicates that the Bahamas still are fertile ground for explorers.

The aggregate area of the Bahamas is slightly greater than the State of Connecticut, but only a small area supports vegetation. In recent years agriculture has shown improvement.

"Sponging" Is Chief Industry

While several of the islands have thick forests, most Bahaman soil is so shallow that modern plows are practically useless. In some places farmers rely on soil that fills honeycombed coral rocks. Yet before Florida tomatoes are ripe, Bahama tomatoes are on the markets of the United States and Canada. Potatoes, yams, and tropical fruits thrive where they can get sufficient roothold.

Most of the Bahamans look to the sea and to winter vacationists for a living. Of the islands' 55,000 inhabitants about three-fourths are descendants of African slaves. They are expert fishermen and guides for sportsmen bent upon matching their skill with game fish that abound in Bahama waters. They are also expert sea turtle hunters but most of them are employed in the islands' sponge industry.

The water about some of the islands swarms with dark-skinned sponge divers; negro womenfolk sit among piles of sponges in the warehouses, expertly cutting, cleaning and sorting sponges; in the towns one frequently comes upon a doorway adorned with a string of sponges, the trademark of a sponge broker; and many cargo boats that leave the islands are laden with bales of sponges destined for American and European ports.

Capital On Small Island

Although New Providence is one of the smaller islands, it is the most important because it is the site of Nassau, the capital. Even in the minds of many seasoned travelers, Nassau not only is synonymous with New Providence but also with the far-flung archipelago. It is the capital, only city, and metropolis of the archipelago.

Normally Nassau has a population of about 12,000 but when frigid winds sweep over northern United States and Canada, its equable climate adds thousands to that figure. Old Nassau, with its low buildings, borders the harbor. Here and there the upper stories of recently-built structures thrust a modern touch into a century-old panorama. Most of the new hotels and buildings, however, are further inland, where they sit amid acres of beautifully landscaped grounds. White walls inclose many of the city's beauty spots and often these are covered with tropical vines. Flowering trees and graceful palms reveal themselves above the barriers.

Once Pirate Headquarters

Columbus found the Bahamas inhabited by peaceful Carib Indians. Spaniards sent many Indians to Haiti to work in mines and on plantations. For a century Spain made no attempt to colonize the islands. Meanwhile pirates who preyed upon

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ALL THE NEWEST STYLES IN SOMBREROS: MEXICO CITY

The Mexican takes pride in his hat and wears the best he can afford. Some of the more ornate specimens weigh several pounds, depending upon the number of silver ornaments attached. Peons use the upturned brims of their cheap straw sombreros as carryalls for food and trinkets. The business and professional men of the Mexican cities wear hats and caps like our own (See Bulletin No. 2).

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The Twenty-Eight States of Mexico

MEXICO, often considered a "Spanish" country, is engaged in the old dispute regarding the correct way of spelling its name. Spaniards and others in Spanish-speaking countries address their mail to "Mejico," which spelling runs against the grain of Mexican "100 per centers." It is the claim of the Mexican champions of the "X" that this letter stands for an Aztec sound much softer than that rough aspirate, the Spanish "J." Opinions about the matter have been filed with the Spanish Academy in Madrid.

Few outsiders realize how distinct Mexico is from other nations, Spanish-speaking or otherwise. Yet, in the matter of governmental structure, Mexico is, like the United States, divided into States. The average American, familiar with our own 48 States and the Canadian provinces, is usually hard put to name and locate more than two or three of Mexico's 28 commonwealths.

Mexico Is as Wide as Long

In Mexico also are two territories. One is Lower California, dry, arid, mountainous and thinly populated. Fifteen hundred miles away from Lower California lies Mexico's other territory, Quintana Roo, farthest east part of the Republic.

It is common to think of Mexico as a great horn sprouting south from southwest United States. The position of the two Mexican territories punctures this geographic myth. Mexico is not a thin nation. It is just as wide as it is long. While its westernmost city is Tiajuana, over the international line from San Diego, California, the outermost point of the Yucatan Peninsula lies as far east as Indianapolis.

The United States has one smaller State than Mexico's smallest. Rhode Island is 300 square miles smaller than Tlaxcala, which lies 50 miles east of Mexico City. Colima, a State on the Pacific coast of Mexico directly west of the capital, measures less than Delaware. But the largest State of Mexico, Chihuahua, across the border from New Mexico, is much smaller than the American giant, Texas. It approximates Oregon, or Illinois and Indiana taken together.

It was by a sign on the railway station at Toluca that Lindbergh, on his first flight to Mexico, in 1927, finally found his position, and then flew directly into Mexico City. The relations between Toluca and Mexico City might be compared roughly to those between Annapolis and Washington. Toluca is the nearest State capital to the Federal City, and its State encloses the Federal District just as Maryland folds about the District of Columbia.

Physically, however, the comparisons are not so close. Both Mexico City and Toluca lie on a high plateau and are surrounded by mountains. Situated 40 miles from Mexico City, Toluca is visited by residents of the Capital as a pleasure reort.

Ranches, Lakes and Mines Near Toluca

The State of Mexico, of which Toluca is the capital, embraces both upland plains and mountains. In addition to the "Valley of Toluca" it includes the famous "Valley of Mexico," the heart of the Republic, with its big haciendas, or ranches, and beautiful scenery. The famed lakes near Mexico City also lie in the State of Mexico. In the western part of the State are rich mines.

Queretaro, the Delaware of Mexico, makes up for its limited area by the richness of its mountains and valleys. The former contain minerals and the latter, deep layers of fertile, well-watered soil which grow pineapples, dates, bananas, pomegranates, figs, and lemons. Queretaro sweet potatoes have a reputation in Mexico like Idaho potatoes have in the United States.

The States of Mexico were originally the areas occupied by the Indian tribes which the Spaniards conquered. Then the conquerors divided the districts among themselves. Nearly all the States have resumed their Indian names. There are exceptions, such as the States of Vera Cruz, San Luis Potosi, Guanajuato and Nuevo Leon.

Although the ancient Aztecs, Zapotecs, and Mayas are responsible for the boundaries of modern States of Mexico, the borders often outline definite geographic units. There are classes handy for Mexican States which our Republic cannot use to advantage. In Mexico there are low States, high States and higher States. The low States are the eastern seaboard units from north to south, Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon, Vera Cruz and Tabasco. The Yucatan Peninsula group of Campeche, Yucatan and Quintana Roo also hugs sea level.

Pacific coastal States are, for the most part, low States, too, but not so low as east coast States: Sonora, Nayarit, Colima, Michoacan, Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas. Then come the high States, that is, those which are 3,000 feet above sea level, Chihuahua, Coahuila and

UMI

Spanish shipping made New Providence their headquarters and the remains of their caves now are among the "sights" of the island.

The first British colony rose on New Providence when Britishers from Bermuda arrived in 1666. Then the Spaniards became interested in their all-but-forgotten islands and destroyed the British settlement. The French also attacked the British and in 1776 the infant American Navy captured Nassau, but released it when it was found to be useless to the insurgent colonies. Since 1781, when the Spaniards made their last attack in the Bahamas, British control of the archipelago has not been questioned.

Note: In the waters surrounding the Bahama Islands live some of the strangest and most interesting forms of undersea life in the world. Students studying tropical fishes should also consult: "Florida, the Fountain of Youth," *National Geographic Magazine*, January, 1930; "Life on a Coral Reef," January, 1927; "Treasure-House of the Gulf Stream," January, 1921; and "Devil-Fishing in the Gulf Stream," June, 1919. The marine life of Bermuda is similar to that of the Bahamas. For two recent articles on deep-sea studies there see: "Fantastic Sea Life from Abyssal Depths," January, 1932; and "A Round Trip to Davy Jones' Locker," June, 1931.

For supplementary reading and photographs see also: "The Book of Fishes," by Dr. John Oliver La Gorce and other authorities, published by the *National Geographic Society*.

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HE MOVES HIS BOAT WITH A SINGLE OAR

Natives of the Bahamas are skilled seamen. This negro boatman sends his craft across the placid waters of a Bahama bay by sculling, that is, twisting the oar at the stern of the boat. One must have an agile wrist to propel a heavily-laden rowboat in this fashion, but it does possess an advantage over ordinary rowing in that the oarsman may at all times face forward, and may steer away from larger and fleeter craft. Many sponge fishermen make the Bahamas their headquarters.

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Tristan da Cunha, One of the World's Loneliest Isles

A LAND of no taxes, no lawyers, no policemen, no governor or government, no money, no mosquitoes, and no snakes.

Before the rush to this paradise begins, prospective settlers will do well to weigh some other omissions on Tristan da Cunha. The island lies almost midway between Cape Town, Africa, and Buenos Aires, Argentina, in the storm-tossed South Atlantic Ocean. It is one of the loneliest inhabited islands in the world.

In Right World but Wrong Place

A plan has now been proposed to place a radio and weather observation station on the island, giving it the first contact with the outside world, other than that supplied by an occasional steamer call.

Tristan da Cunha, a land of no taxes and no government! A land also of no song birds, no butterflies, no bees, and—when ships fail to come for a year or two—no soap, no tea, no sugar, no candles, no flour and no new clothing. Often the potato hills yield no harvest. Then the 130 islanders verge on starvation.

Tristan da Cunha is in the right world but the wrong place. Its longitude is perfectly respectable. Any resident of Freetown, Sierra Leone, Africa, living on the same longitude line, will report that 12 degrees west is a very good longitude indeed. Locating at 37 degrees south was Tristan da Cunha's mistake.

Geographically the island, twenty-one miles in circumference, is like an unfortunate tight rope artist who balances near the middle of a 3,700-mile wire, unable to reach Buenos Aires at one end or Cape Town at the other.

Was Discovered Shortly after America

Discovered in 1506 by Tristan da Cunha, a Portuguese sailor, visited intermittently for fresh water by American whalers, the island received no permanent population until Great Britain established a military post when Napoleon went to St. Helena. A corporal elected to stay behind when the guard was removed.

With a few shipwrecked sailors and five imported wives the colony began. The drowning of fifteen men when the island's rowboat was wrecked in 1885 left, it is reported, one adult man to look after the women and orphans.

Whalers called Tristan da Cunha's latitude the Roaring Forties. A missionary, who, with his wife, ministers to the islanders, tells how the Forties roar:

"It is impossible to take a cup of milk from one house to another when the wind is high without having the milk blown out of the cup, unless the cup is firmly covered. When the wind rises to hurricane force, as it does for days at a time, you can't go out of the house without danger to yourself. No person can stand against the hurricanes of Tristan da Cunha."

Was Haven for American Vessels

Not by a great margin has the State Department in Washington, D. C., missed having the worry of helpless Tristan da Cunha on its shoulders. An American once claimed the island. Tristan da Cunha had a measure of prosperity in the early years of the nineteenth century when the whale enticed men and wooden ships into the Roaring Forties. It was a haven for sailing ships from Salem, Gloucester and Boston.

A Salem man named Lambert and a companion took up their residence on

UMI

Durango. The first two lie in the Rio Grande basin between the wide, open arms of the mountain ranges that border the famous Valley of Mexico.

South of Durango are the higher States, and, it may be added, the smaller, and the most populous and the richest States of Mexico. The average elevation of eleven States and the Federal District is more than a mile above sea level. Orizaba Peak, 125 miles southeast of Mexico City, is the key pin of a gigantic pair of dividers opened to a sixty degree angle. Each arm of the dividers is a mountain range, the left arm connecting with the Rocky Mountains and the right losing itself at Monterrey.

Has Its "Federal District"

Between the arms spreads the fertile, mile-high or higher region of blue lakes and fruitful valleys, elevated enough to have an equable climate. Just as the mountain ranges come together at Orizaba, so the trade routes meet at Mexico City. Like Washington, the Mexican capital has been isolated within a small "Distrito Federal," administered by the National Congress. But there is this difference, Mexico City is the New York as well as the Washington of Mexico. Its population of 968,443 nearly equals that of the most populous of the nation's provinces.

Just as the United States has, in the State of Washington, a commonwealth named for the hero of its Revolution, so Mexico has honored the father of its freedom from Spain. Padre Hidalgo was a parish priest in Dolores, in the State of Guanajuato, until he led the revolution in 1810. Dolores has now become Dolores Hidalgo. Hidalgo State is one of the most mountainous in Mexico. Six ranges cross the relatively small area, creating a maze of peaks and ridges. In this tangle of mountains are some of the heaviest mineral deposits in the Republic.

A near-by area of 8,600 square miles of the Valley of Mexico has been carved out to make the State of Hidalgo. South of Mexico City another relatively small State, Morelos, honors another hero of Mexico's war of independence.

Note: Mexico, our sister republic to the south, is described and illustrated (many photographs in full color) in the following articles from the *National Geographic Magazine:* "Unearthing America's Ancient History," July, 1931; "Mexico City, North America's Oldest Metropolis," and "Adventures in Color on Mexico's West Coast," July, 1930; "Buenos Aires to Washington by Horse," February, 1929; "To Bogotá and Back by Air," May, 1928; "Among the Zapotecs of Mexico," May, 1927; "Chichen Itzá, an Ancient American Mecca," January, 1925; and "The Isthmus of Tehuantepec," May, 1924.

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WEAVING THE SERAPE, MEXICO'S BLANKET OF MANY COLORS

Both men and women are expert weavers of this useful article, which serves as scarf, carpet, or bed covering. On a primitive hand loom this Zapotec Indian boy in Oaxaca patiently follows an age-old pattern in colored thread. Other pattern-forms hang behind him on the wall.

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The Eskimo, Guardian of the Last Frontier

WATERFRONT loungers at Elizabeth, New Jersey, were startled recently when an Eskimo, paddling an 18-foot canoe, pulled up to the dock and unloaded his two children, three dogs, and a movie camera. The visitor from the far northland said he was returning to his Canadian home after a 12,000-mile trip by canoe down the Mississippi River, along the Gulf Coast and up the Atlantic seaboard.

The Eskimos, according to dispatches from the Far North, are slowly changing. Each year more and more of these remote guardians of the last frontier are adopting the white man's ways.

First "Americans" Met by Europeans

In Alaska and western Canada many Eskimos have broken away from hunting and fishing to meet personal food and clothing wants and have become trappers and traders. In Greenland and northern Labrador the Eskimo has clustered around the mission stations, adopting the white man's style of house, rather than sod huts, igloos and skin tents, and bartering skins for the white man's canned foods, firearms, clothing and phonographs.

The Eskimos were the first people met by Europeans on American shores, but they are still among the least known, and certainly the least seen, of all native American tribes. Scandinavians came in contact with Eskimos in Greenland and in Labrador in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Since that time the Eskimos' main contacts with the white man have been through explorers, missionaries, police officers, and occasional trappers and prospectors.

The name Eskimo is said to have been given by Biard in 1611 (in the form "Excomminquois"). It means "eaters of raw fish."

Considering their limited numbers, the Eskimos cover a tremendous range. The total Eskimo population of the world has been estimated at only 35,000, but Eskimo villages can be found here and there throughout the coasts of Arctic America from eastern Greenland and northern Labrador to the westernmost parts of Alaska, and even on the tip of Asia across the Bering Strait.

Throughout this distance, more than 5,000 miles, the Eskimos speak one language, a strange tongue which requires a vocabulary of 10,000 words. As in Chinese, inflection is very important. Few outsiders learn it, although a "pidgin English" has spung up which some explorers and missionaries mistake for the Eskimo language.

Live on Birds, Animals, Fish

Nearly all Eskimos live on or near the coast because they get most of their food from the sea. They raise no vegetables, supplementing their meat diet in summer with wild berries and roots. In summer they hunt land animals and birds, as a rule, and in the winter they live on sea mammals and fish.

Where least affected by the white man's civilization—along the Arctic coast of Canada and in the islands north of Hudson Bay—the Eskimo is perhaps the healthiest and happiest person on earth. The village is the largest social unit. There are no chiefs or rulers. "Leading men" have influence but no authority. Large animals caught are shared with others, and personal property is secure, for one tribe never makes war against another. Along many of the inlets of the Northwest Territories in Canada the Eskimo still hunts with bows and arrows, and harpoons, in little skin boats, or kayaks.

UMI

Tristan da Cunha and Lambert declared himself sovereign and sole possessor of the island, "on the rational and sure ground of absolute occupancy." He renamed the group, The Islands of Refreshment. His hope was to develop what might be called a "filling station" for whaling ships. But Lambert and his partner were drowned two years later in the tempestuous seas for which the island is infamous.

Bulletin No. 3, April 25, 1932.

Geography Illustrations on Loose-Leaf Sheets

Until further notice the National Geographic Society's six Pictorial Geography sets—288 world-revealing photographs on loose-leaf sheets, and 288 vivid geographic narratives that explain the pictures—may be had for $3.50 by teachers, schools and libraries. The attached form may be used in ordering:

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MEXICO'S "WHITE HOUSE" WAS ONCE STORMED BY AMERICAN TROOPS

Historic Chapultepec Castle, fugitive home of many great personages, is steeped in history and tragedy. Viceroy Gálvez started it in 1783, but left it unfinished. From 1842 it was used as Mexico's "West Point," and in 1847 its 40 cadets took part in the Battle of Chapultepec, the last big engagement of the Mexican-American War. United States forces under General Pillow suffered heavily before capturing it. The castle stands on a wooded hill, commanding a fine view of Mexico's capital city (See Bulletin No. 2).

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Coast Guard Engaged in Annual "Battle with the Bergs"

LAST year the depression, or something, hit the iceberg. At any rate the Atlantic ship lanes were nearly free of the menace. This year the cutters *Tampa* and *Pontchartrain* of the United States Coast Guard, which do the work for the International Ice Patrol, report a return to iceberg normalcy. Several large bergs and hundreds of "growlers" have pushed traffic down to "Track B" of the Atlantic lanes (see chart next page).

It was just twenty years ago, April 14, that the *Titanic,* queen ship of the seas, carrying a precious cargo of some of the best minds of Europe and America, ran into an iceberg at night 350 miles south of Cape Race and sank with a loss of more than 1,500 lives. Ever since this catastrophe a guard has been kept each spring to protect the hundreds of ships and thousands of travelers on the world's busiest ocean lane.

No Large Ship Lost Since 1912

The annual "battle with the bergs" can be compared to some jungle tragedy, in which the lesser animals stand watch and wait for a lion, that has invaded their hunting ground, to sicken and die before they again take up their normal life. The International Ice Patrol, jointly maintained by several nations, watches and waits for the icebergs to die. For four months, from March to July, the Patrol scouts for the ice monarchs, which are carried by the Labrador Current to the haunts of man.

No successful method of attacking the "enemy" has been conceived, although experiments continue. But by watching the bergs like guardian crows in a cornfield, the *Tampa* and the *Pontchartrain* are able to give wireless warning of ice danger to the whole flock of transatlantic shipping. No large ship has been lost since the Ice Patrol began its guard in 1912, and there has been no loss of life due to icebergs.

To the laymen a report that a 32-degree "cold wall" is over the entire Grand Banks means little. It is very significant to the Ice Patrol. Bergs will drift down the Banks without melting as long as they are in the Labrador Current, in which the water hovers near freezing temperature. But once they cross the "cold wall" (see map, next page) in the Gulf Stream, with its 55 or 60 degree water, they waste away in a few days and disappear.

Each spring the Labrador Current forces a cold tongue of water into the warm Gulf Stream, which flows northeast toward England. The tongue reaches maximum toward the last of April and then recedes until it is confined once more to the Labrador coast.

Greenland Is Home of Icebergs

Greenland's "icy mountains" alone are the source of the icebergs that come as far south as the steamer lanes, journeying about 1,800 miles—approximately the distance from Washington, D. C., to Denver—before they become "white specters" to shipping.

Always Greenland's ice mantle is moving down the slope of the land toward the sea in great glaciers, pushing out through the valleys. As the ice reaches the sea it noses out into the water until buoyancy lifts it up, the front of the glacier breaks off at a weak spot, and, splash, an iceberg is created!

There are eight principal berg-producing glaciers in Greenland. The worst offenders are those of Disko Bay, Jakobshavn, and Torsukatak, Karajak, and

UMI

While snow houses, or igloos, are always associated with Eskimos, about half the Eskimo world does not know them at all. Igloos are almost never used in Labrador or in Alaska. Where the white man's frame house is not obtainable the native Eskimo lives in a dugout covered with sod, the roof being supported by poles or animal bones. In the summer the skin tent, or tupic, is used, particularly while on hunting forays.

Have No Iron and Little Wood

The igloo, perhaps the most unusual of all dwellings, is made of blocks of snow, with a clear piece of ice for a window. Beds and benches are of ice, with warm furs on top. A shallow pan made of stone or iron, shaped somewhat like a dustpan, is used for a lamp or stove. Along the flat side is a dry moss for a wick. Inside the pan is seal oil. The cooking kettle is suspended above the pan. Iron kettles and pans are of recent use, and are acquired from the white man, because the Eskimo has no iron, and very little wood.

Note: Classes studying the Eskimo and his far-away Arctic Northland should also read: "On Mackenzie's Trail to the Polar Sea," *National Geographic Magazine*, August, 1931; "To-day on the 'Yukon Trail of 1898,'" July, 1930; "Gentlemen Adventurers of the Air," November 1929; "Columbus of the Pacific," January, 1927; "Navigating the *Norge* from Rome to the North Pole and Beyond," August, 1927; "The First Flight to the North Pole," September, 1926; and "First Natural-Color Photographs from the Arctic," March, 1926.

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A WASHINGTON, D. C., CLASS STUDIES THE ESKIMO

As the Eskimo can seldom be induced to leave his beloved northland, and as he lives off the beaten travel routes, students have few chances to learn what he looks like, how he lives and how he dresses, except through good photographs and descriptions. The "Eskimo" set of the Pictorial Geography Series contains 24 clear-cut pictures, with explanatory text, showing the life of this little-known but fascinating race. (See form, following Bulletin No. 3, for information about the Pictorial Geography series, published by the National Geographic Society.)

Umanak. Then there are the three other west coast glaciers—Upernivik, Godthaab, and Frederikshaab.

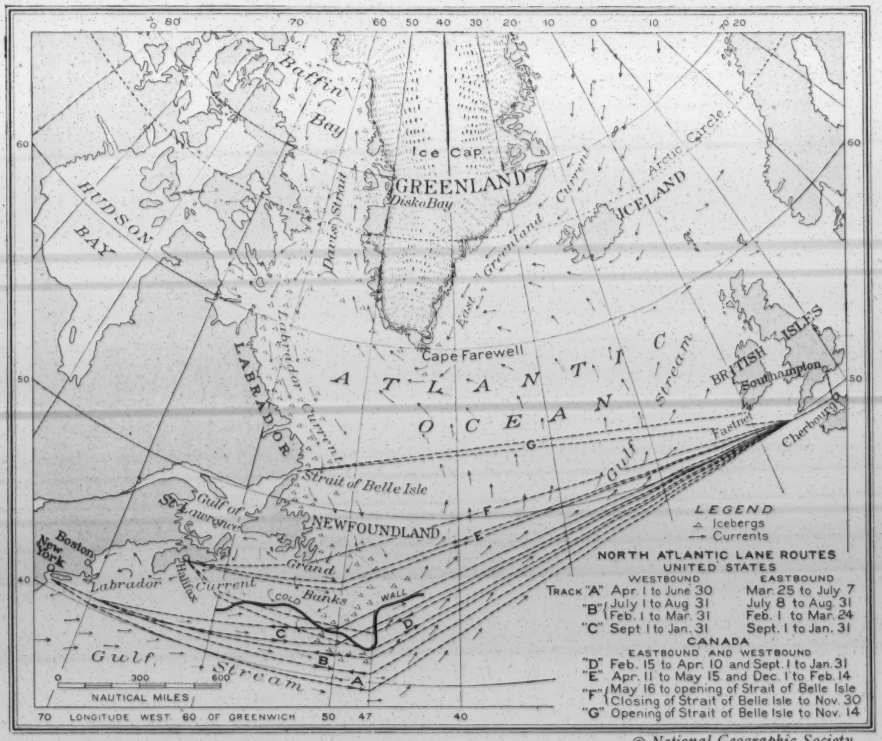
Like a Trip on the "Flying Dutchman"

Going on Ice Patrol with either the *Tampa* or the *Pontchartrain* in early spring is like embarking on the "Flying Dutchman." That old legend of the Dutch skipper who was condemned to beat around Cape of Good Hope is very real to the Coast Guard men on North Atlantic service. The Dutch ship and crew shuttled over the sea buffeted by gales because once the captain uttered a monstrous oath.

For two solid weeks a Coast Guard crew lives amid the gales of one of the most storm-plagued spots on the seven seas because of a different sort of oath the nations made that the *Titanic* disaster should not be repeated. That oath redeemed, the *Pontchartrain* can steam into the safe shelter of Halifax for two weeks' respite while the *Tampa* takes her place.

Note: See also "Standing Iceberg Guard in the North Atlantic," *National Geographic Magazine*, July, 1926; "Fishes and Fisheries of Our North Atlantic Seaboard," December, 1923; and "Life on the Grand Banks," July, 1921.

Bulletin No. 5, April 25, 1932.



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"BATTLE LINES" OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC

From March 1 to July 1, this dreary space of fog-bound ocean is patrolled by two vessels of the U. S. Coast Guard, with a third vessel in reserve. The *Tampa* and *Pontchartrain*, and the *General Greene* in reserve, make up the International Ice Patrol. They fly the American flag, and are manned by American officers and seamen, but the following countries contribute to the expense of the service: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United States.